

# The Kinship Connection

For grandparents raising grandchildren

Go4Life Month

SEPTEMBER 2015

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING

We're not talking about running a half marathon or becoming a championship weight-lifter, but we are talking about getting active and feeling better.

Almost everyone can safely do some kind of physical activity and **Go4Life** can help you find the right activities for you, even if you have chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes or arthritis.

**Go4Life**, an exercise and physical activity campaign from the National Institute on Aging at NIH, is designed to help you fit exercise and physical activity into your daily life. Motivating older adults to become physically active for the first time, return to exercise after a break in their routines, or build more exercise and physical activity into weekly routines are the essential elements of **Go4Life**.



**Go4Life** offers exercises motivational tips, and free resources to help you get ready, start exercising, and keep going. **Go4Life** is a national outreach campaign which includes an exercise guide in both English and Spanish, and an interactive website.

If you have not been physically active you may want to talk to your healthcare provider before starting any vigorous activity. If you are ready to go, get started with this newsletter.


Then check out:

- **Go4Life** website at [www.go4life.nia.nih.gov](http://www.go4life.nia.nih.gov).
- Attend our **Go4Life** event on September 21.
- Give us a call at (609) 465-5115 ext. 609 and we'll help you get going.
- Or call the National Institute on Aging at 800-222-2225.

## Dear Grandparents:

**Sometimes we are so busy that even a little change can seem impossible. But consider this, what if a small change—something that takes maybe 5 hours a week—can make you feel better, look better and live longer? What if a small change can make life better? You'd do it right?**

**Here's a small change that WILL make your life better. Participate with us during Go4Life month, a program designed to help older people include exercise in their lives. It's never too late to get active! Let us help you.**

  
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Family and Community Health Sciences Educator

P.S. Many of the articles in this newsletter are reprinted in whole or in part from the National Institute of Aging web site. Thanks!

# How Exercise Can Help You

You know this...exercise is important. Here are just a few of the benefits of exercise and physical activity:



- Can help maintain and improve your physical strength and fitness.
- Can help improve your ability to do the everyday things you want to do.
- Can help improve your balance.
- Can help manage and improve diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and osteoporosis.
- Can help reduce feelings of depression and may improve mood and overall well-being.
- May improve your ability to shift quickly between tasks, plan an activity, and ignore irrelevant information.

**The key word in all these benefits is YOU. Let's see how fit and active you are now and how much effort you can put into being active.**

## 4 Types of Exercise

Exercise and physical activity fall into four basic categories—endurance, strength, balance, and flexibility. Most people tend to focus on one activity or type of exercise and think they're doing enough. Each type is different. Doing them all will give you more benefits. Mixing it up also helps to reduce boredom and cut your risk of injury.

**Endurance, or aerobic activities increase** your breathing and heart rate. They keep your heart, lungs, and circulatory system healthy and improve your overall fitness. Building your endurance makes it easier to carry out many of your everyday activities.

- Brisk walking or jogging
- Yard work (mowing, raking, digging)
- Dancing

**Strength exercises make** your muscles stronger. Even small increases in strength can make a big difference in your ability to stay independent and carry out everyday activities, such as climbing stairs and carrying groceries. These exercises also are called "strength training" or "resistance training."

- Lifting weights
- Using a resistance band
- Using your own body weight. For example: push-ups, sit-ups, deep knee bends

**Balance exercises** help prevent falls, a common problem in older adults. Many lower-body strength exercises also will improve your balance.

- Heel-to-toe walk
- Tai Chi
- Light Jogging

**Flexibility exercises** stretch your muscles and can help your body stay limber. Being flexible gives you more freedom of movement for other exercises as well as for your everyday activities.

- Shoulder and upper arm stretch
- Calf stretch
- Yoga



# Stay Safe

Almost anyone, at any age, can safely do some kind of exercise and physical activity. You can be active even if you have a long-term condition, like heart disease, diabetes, or arthritis. Staying safe while you exercise is always important, whether you're just starting a new activity or you haven't been active for a long time. Be sure to review the specific safety tips related to endurance, strength, balance, and flexibility exercises.

## Talking with Your Healthcare Provider

Most people don't need to check with their health care provider first before doing physical activity. However, you may want to talk with your health care provider if you haven't been physically active and you want to start a vigorous exercise program or significantly increase your physical activity. Your activity level is an important topic to discuss with your health care provider as part of your ongoing health care.

Ask how physical activity can help you, whether you should avoid certain activities, and how to modify exercises to fit your situation.

Other reasons to talk with your health care provider:

- Any new symptoms you haven't yet discussed
- Dizziness, shortness of breath
- Chest pain or pressure
- The feeling that your heart is skipping, racing, or fluttering
- Blood clots
- An infection or fever with muscle aches
- Unplanned weight loss
- Foot or ankle sores that won't heal
- Joint swelling
- A bleeding or detached retina, eye surgery, or laser treatment
- A hernia
- Recent hip or back surgery

**"Be not afraid of growing slowly, be afraid only of standing still."**  
~ *Chinese Proverb*

# Healthy Eating

Being physically active and eating a healthy diet are keys to a healthy lifestyle. But what does "healthy eating" really mean?

Healthy eating:

- Emphasizes vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products.
- Includes lean meat, poultry, fish, cooked dry beans and peas, eggs, and nuts.
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, salt, and added sugars.
- Balances the calories from foods and beverages with calories burned through physical activity so that you can maintain a healthy weight.

We have lots of materials to help you with healthy eating. **Call us at (609) 465-5115 ext. 609 for resources.** Or log into *the What's on Your Plate? Smart Food Choices for Healthy Aging* at [www.nia.nih.gov](http://www.nia.nih.gov).

# Next Steps

Sign up for **MyGo4Life** and use the interactive My Starting Point tool to figure out your current activity level. For a couple of weekdays and a weekend, keep track of how much time you exercise or are physically active.



Record how much time you spend doing each activity. You can also print a blank activity log, if you'd like to fill one in by hand. and use the interactive My Starting Point tool to figure out your current activity level.

The web site, [www.go4life.nia.nih.gov](http://www.go4life.nia.nih.gov), will also answer exercise questions, give you lots of exercise ideas. You can even get an online trainer to help and encourage you!

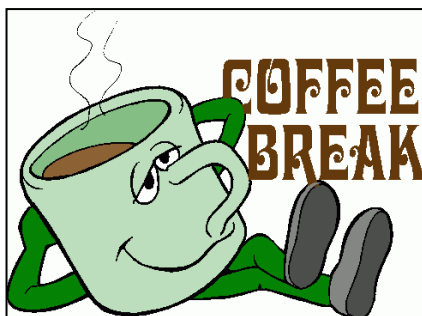
# Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

## Mark your calendars for upcoming meetings

September 21, 2015 (Monday) – Go4Life Program

October 21, 2015 (Wednesday) – To be announced

November 16, 2015 (Monday) – To be announced



### Coffee Fridays – Coming this Fall....stay tuned!

Coffee Friday is designed to give grandparents a safe place where they can discuss their feelings about raising their grandchildren. Each month, topics are introduced that are related to the issues and concerns grandparents have about raising their grandchildren. Coffee Fridays are scheduled for one hour in the morning. Childcare will not be available.

## FREE CAR SEAT SAFETY CHECKS

**Burke Motors and the Cape May County Sheriff's Office, Stone Harbor Blvd., Cape May Court House, 9 am to Noon, on the 3d Monday of each month. Call 609-463-6425.**

## FAMILY HEALTH REMINDER

### Flu Shot Time!

The best way to protect you and your family from the flu is to get a flu shot and now is the time!

Contact your health provider or call the Cape May County Health Department at (609)-463-6581.

*If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please call us at (609) 465-5115 ext. 609, or email [Rochford@njaes.rutgers.edu](mailto:Rochford@njaes.rutgers.edu), or fax (609) 465-5953.*

***The Kinship Connection** is published twice a year for grandparents raising grandchildren. The **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren** Support Group and all of Rutgers Cooperative Extension's educational programs are offered without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.*

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